

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 113399

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NATO

SUBJECT: EUROGROUP PROPOSAL ON EQUIPMENT COOPERATION AND
STANDARDIZATION

REFS: A. STATE 101132; B. USNATO 2648 (NOTAL)

1. INCREASED EQUIPMENT COOPERATION AND STANDARDIZATION
WILL BE A MAJOR TOPIC OF INTEREST AT THE UPCOMING DPC
MINISTERIAL. FOR YOUR INFORMATION, THE FOLLOWING IS AN
ADVANCE TEXT OF A LETTER TO SECRETARY SCHLESINGER WRITTEN
ON BEHALF OF THE EUROGROUP MINISTERS BY UK MOD MASON
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AFTER THE EUROGROUP MEETING IN LONDON ON MAY 7.

BEGIN TEXT. DEAR JIM, I AM WRITING ON BEHALF OF MY
EUROGROUP COLLEAGUES TO LET YOU KNOW OF THE CONCLUSIONS

WE REACHED AT OUR MEETING IN LONDON ON 7 MAY DURING A DISCUSSION OF EQUIPMENT CO-OPERATION AND STANDARDIZATION, AND IN PARTICULAR OF THE WAY IN WHICH WE SHOULD LIKE TO SEE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES DEVELOP. THE SUBJECT OF EQUIPMENT CO-OPERATION IN THE ALLIANCE HAS HAD A CENTRAL PLACE IN THE THINKING OF EUROGROUP MINISTERS OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS. IF WE CAN GET THIS RIGHT, MUCH ELSE CAN FOLLOW IN THE FIELDS OF COMMON TRAINING, SUPPORT AND LOGISTICS; AND WE SHALL

OBTAIN THE MILITARY ADVANTAGES OF A MUCH GREATER DEGREE OF STANDARDIZATION. AS YOU KNOW, LAST JUNE I INTRODUCED IN THE EUROGROUP A DISCUSSION OF THE ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN DEFENSE INDUSTRY IN PROCUREMENT OF EQUIPMENT FOR NATO FORCES. THIS LED TO OUR AGREEING IN THE EUROGROUP THAT THERE WAS A NEED, IN THE INTERESTS OF THE ALLIANCE AS A WHOLE, TO MAINTAIN A HIGHLY DEVELOPED TECHNOLOGICAL, SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL BASE IN EUROPE WHILE AT THE SAME TIME SEEKING TO ACHIEVE THE CLOSEST POSSIBLE COOPERATION IN ARMS PRODUCTION AND PROCUREMENT BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES OF NORTH AMERICA AND EUROPE. WE ASKED OUR NATIONAL ARMAMENTS DIRECTORS TO FORMULATE SOME DETAILED PROPOSALS IN SUPPORT OF THIS OBJECTIVE, AND WE WERE GLAD THAT THE DPC MINISTERS TOOK UP THE SAME THEME AT THEIR JUNE MEETING. WE CONTINUED OUR DISCUSSION IN DECEMBER AND, I BELIEVE, ACHIEVED SOMETHING OF A BREAKTHROUGH AT THE MEETING OF THE DPC WITH YOUR DECLARATION THAT RATIONALIZATION IN THIS CONTEXT HAD TO BE A TWO-WAY STREET.

A GOOD DEAL FLOWS FROM ALL THIS. IF THERE IS TO BE A TWO-WAY STREET, IT IS CLEAR THAT BOTH THE EUROGROUP COUNTRIES AND THE NORTH AMERICAN COUNTRIES MUST DO THEIR BEST TO GET THE TRAFFIC FLOWING. IF WE ARE TO MAINTAIN THE HEALTH OF EUROPEAN INDUSTRIES, THERE MUST BE PURCHASES BY THE US FROM THE PRODUCTION LINES OF EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AS WELL AS THE OTHER WAY ROUND. IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT
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THAT THE EUROPEAN CONTRIBUTION SHOULD NOT BE LIMITED TO DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION IN THE QTE LOW TECHNOLOGY UNQTE AREAS TOGETHER WITH PRODUCTION UNDER LICENSE OF US DESIGNS.

CONTINUED RELIANCE ON THE TRADITIONAL ALLIANCE APPROACH TO COOPERATION WOULD NO DOUBT CONTINUE TO YIELD SLOW PROGRESS, UNDER THE SPURS OF PRESSURE ON OUR DEFENSE BUDGETS AND OF THE GROWTH IN COMPLEXITY AND COST OF EQUIPMENT ADEQUATE TO MEET THE THREAT. BUT MY EUROGROUP COLLEAGUES AND I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THIS APPROACH IS ADEQUATE TO THE CHALLENGE WE FACE. WE ARE CONVINCED THAT WE ALL NEED TO MOVE INTO A HIGHER GEAR, AND THAT A

MAJOR STIMULUS IS NECESSARY.

WE THEREFORE HAVE IN MIND THAT EUROPE AND THE US SHOULD AGREE TARGETS FOR PROCUREMENT FROM ONE ANOTHER OVER A PERIOD OF YEARS AS A FRAMEWORK FOR RECIPROCAL PURCHASES ON AN EQUITABLY BALANCED BASIS. WE THINK THAT THE CONCEPT OF AGREED TARGETS OUTLINED IN MR. CALLAGHAN'S RECENT REPORT PREPARED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE (QTE US/EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COOPERATION IN MILITARY AND

CIVIL TECHNOLOGY UNQTE) IS ON THE RIGHT LINES, THOUGH WE THINK THAT BOTH THE DETAILS OF THE CONCEPT AND THE PRECISE FIGURES REQUIRE FURTHER THOUGHT. WE SHOULD ALSO LIKE TO PURSUE WITH YOU THE POSSIBILITY OF MORE COMPLEMENTARY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS, AND AIM FOR COOPERATION IN LOGISTIC SUPPORT AND TRAINING FOR COMMON WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT; AND WE SHOULD OF COURSE SEEK TO INCREASE INTERDEPENDENCE FURTHER IN THE LONGER TERM.

WE PROPOSE TO TASK OUR EUROGROUP NATIONAL ARMAMENTS DIRECTORS TO DEVELOP THESE PROPOSALS AND WORK OUT DETAILED ARRANGEMENTS. THEY WILL BE PREPARING A LIST OF EUROPEAN EQUIPMENTS THAT COULD BE AVAILABLE TO THE US UNDER THE TERMS OF OUR PROPOSAL, AND WE WILL LET YOU HAVE THIS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. ON THE BASIS OF WORK THAT IS ALREADY IN HAND TO PREPARE AND REVIEW JOINTLY A COMPREHENSIVE SCHEDULE OF THE PLANS OF EUROGROUP COUNTRIES
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FOR MAJOR EQUIPMENT PROCUREMENT, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO PREPARE FOR DISCUSSION OF OUR OWN EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS OF WHICH SOME MAY BE SUITABLE FOR PURCHASE FROM THE US; BUT OUR ABILITIES TO PURCHASE WILL DEPEND LARGELY ON OUR BEING ABLE TO SATISFY OURSELVES OF A SATISFACTORY BALANCE OF TRADE IN EQUIPMENTS. THE FOCUS OF DISCUSSION WOULD THEN, WE ENVISAGE, SHIFT TO THE NATO CONFERENCE OF NATIONAL ARMAMENT DIRECTORS, WHERE, OF COURSE, CANADA AND FRANCE AS WELL AS THE US ARE REPRESENTED.

IT WOULD BE INTERESTING TO HEAR YOUR GENERAL REACTIONS TO THESE IDEAS AT THE DEFENSE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING ON 22-23 MAY.

BEST WISHES, SINCERELY, ROY. END TEXT.

2. THE UK PLANS TO GIVE COPIES OF THIS LETTER TO SYG LUNS AND CANADIAN PERMREP. OTHER MEMBERS OF EUROGROUP ARE AWARE OF LETTER BUT FRANCE, PORTUGAL AND ICELAND ARE NOT IN EUROGROUP AND WILL NOT RECEIVE COPIES. WHILE POSTS SHOULD NOT TAKE THE INITIATIVE IN RAISING ISSUE,

ANY INDICATION OF HOST-NATION ATTITUDES TO THE PROPOSAL
DESCRIBED IN MOD MASON'S LETTER SHOULD BE REPORTED.

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